Hochschule Bremerhaven
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Institut für Maritimen Tourismus

Stranded at Sea

Exploring Passenger Reactions During Accidents at Sea

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5th International Cruise Conference

Bremerhaven – 25th of January 2014

Prof. Dr. Alexis Papathanassis

Cruise Management & E-Tourism

Cruise Research Society

‘Too Big to Sail’*

The Costa Concordia Aftermath and Questions Raised

‘Given the size of today’s ships, any problem immediately becomes a very big problem,’

“The simple problem is they are building them too big and putting too many people aboard,”

“My answer is they probably exceeded the point of manageability.”

The New York Times

October 27, 2013

Too Big to Sail? Cruise Ships Face Scrutiny

A recent report by the Coast Guard on the Splendor fire revealed glaring problems with the crew’s firefighting abilities as well as failures in fire safety equipment.

The investigation did not address the size of the ship, which carried 3,299 passengers. But it showed that big vessels can quickly become crippled by small fires that disable complex systems. No passengers were hurt, but the damage to the engine room was severe, disabling the ship’s power and forcing it to be towed to port in San Diego.

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* Mouawad, J. (2013)

Incidents at Sea...
Beyond the Titanic and Concordia!

Image Source: http://www.cruiselawnews.com/tags/hearing/

Reported Incidents of Ships Sinking 1990-2013*:

- 48 in Total

Disabling and major events 1990-2013*:

- 448 in Total
  - *139 Shipboard Fires*
  - *106 Ship Collisions*
- ***203** Other **Disabling Events***
  (Power loss, Propulsion problems, Engine Damage, etc.)

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*Klein, R. (2014) - Online

CARNIVAL TRIUMPH INCIDENT

Four Days drifting at Sea with no Power

Image Source: http://media.cagle.com/95/2013/02/15/127284_600.jpg

Image Source: http://edgecast.metatube-files.buscafs.com/uploads/gallery/pics/gallery_pic_8596_77913.jpg

Image Source: http://www.cruiselawnews.com/uploads/image/Angry%20Cruise%20Clock.jpg

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Carnival Triumph Incident
Main Facts

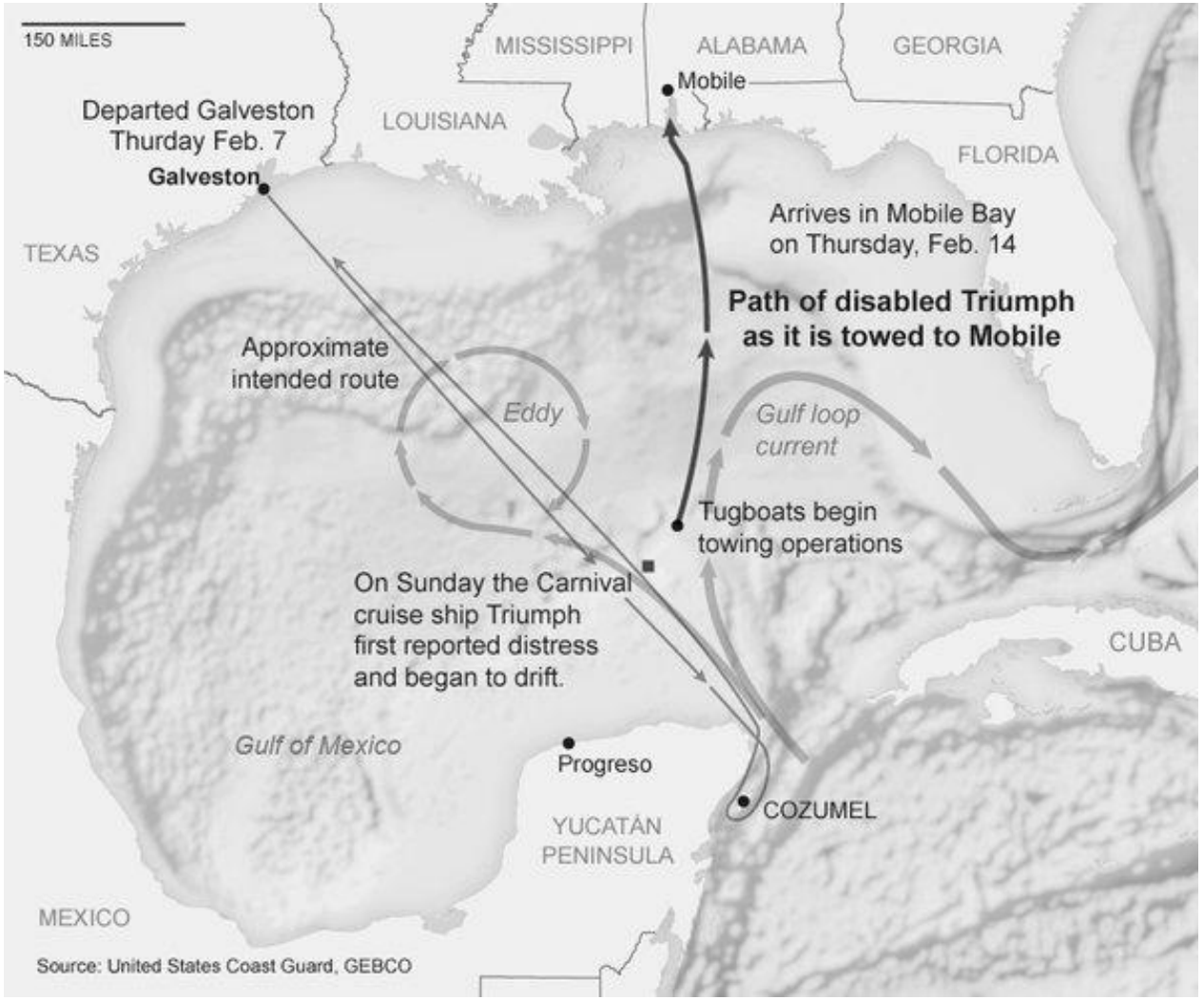

Image Source: http://www.nytimes.com/imagepages/2013/02/15/us/15cruise-webmap.html?ref=us

- 10th of February 2013
  - Fire in the machine rooms
  - 3.143 Pax and 1.086 Crew an Bord
  - Approx. 240 km from the Mexican coast
  - Fire was extinguished but there was a loss of propulsion and energy
- 11th of February 2013
  - Emergency Generators restored some shipboard functions
  - Carnival Legend, Carnival Elation and Carnival Conquest provided supplies (food and water)
- 13th of February 2013
  - Four tugboats towed the vessel to the port of Mobile (Alabama)
- 14th of February 2013
  - Arrival at port and disembarkation of guests

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Carnival Triumph Incident

Some Passenger Reactions…

Image Source: http://www.nytimes.com/imagepages/2013/02/15/us/jp-cruise.html

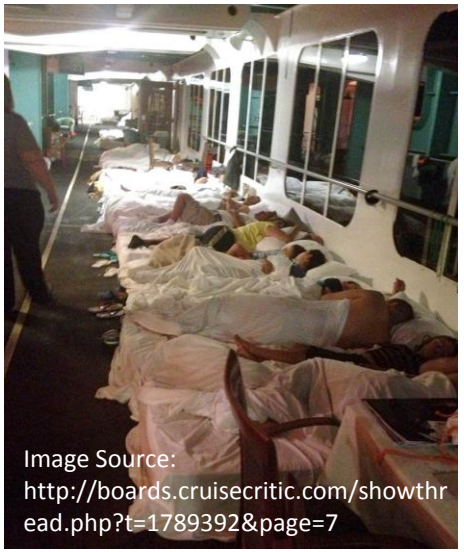

Image Source: http://boards.cruisecritic.com/showthread.php?t=1789392&page=7

Image Source: http://photoblog.nbcnews.com/_news/2013/02/14/16968298-passengers-begin-disembarking-from-carnival-triumph-cruise-ship?lite

Image Source: http://www.nytimes.com/imagepages/2013/02/15/us/CRUISE.html

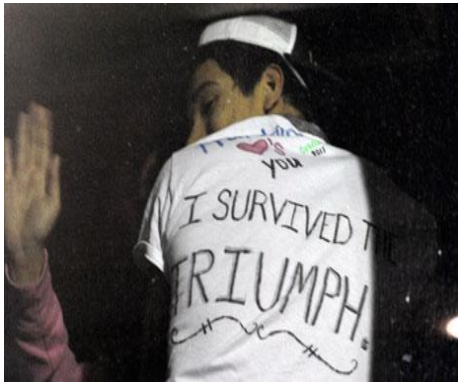

Image Source: http://www.theguardian.com/world/shortcuts/2013/feb/15/carnival-triumph-six-cruises-from-hell

Image Source: http://boards.cruisecritic.com/showthread.php?t=1789392&page=7

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Research Question & Relevance

'Exploring Distressed Passenger Behaviour'

Research Aim:

- *Analysis and interpretation of the behaviour and perceptions of cruise passengers, during longer periods of exposure to adverse conditions at sea*

Relevance:

- Relatively high proportion of disabling incidents at sea
- Increasing ship size and technological complexity/dependence
- Increasing cruise population diversity (also combined with demographic changes)

Potential Implications

- Cruise emergency procedures
- Cruise rescue & relief plans
- Safety training of cruise staff (hotel and nautical)

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RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Content Analysis

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Content Analysis of Secondary Data

Focus of Incident Eye Witnesses

Keyword Search:

- Cruise disasters
- Cruise incidents
- Power loss
- Cruise Fire
- Azamara Quest, Carnival Triumpf, Carnival Legend, Carnival Dream, Costa Allegra, Costa Romantica

Source Data:

- 22 Newspaper / Magazine Reports
- 4 Cruiser Forums
- 2 Televised Reports

Data Collection:

- Select: Reports / Text containing direct quotes from incident survivors
- Reject: Reports / Text containing 3rd party comments on the incidents

Meta-Data:

- # Sources = 28
- # Unique References = 103
- # References (Open Codes): 137
- Av. Open Codes / Source = 5.89

Coding

- 15 Categories
- 6 Variable Groups

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RESEARCH RESULTS & IMPLICATIONS

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Dealing with the Situation…
*Problem-Oriented Coping**

Axial Code

9 Active Involvement

Open Code Examples

*"It was not dramatic. It was quiet. After (the fire was out) it was **just boring**"*

*"Passengers from 25 different countries began to bond-United States, Australia, New Zealand, Germany, Canada, Scotland, England, France, Denmark, Poland, Russia – you name it. **We shared stories**, toasted each other with rounds of drinks, played trivia, enjoyed one another's company and rallied around a crew (who was now "sleeping" outside because their rooms on lower decks were unbearably hot). **We began a fund to try to help the injured crew**"*

- Strategies or actions aimed at changing the stressful situation
- "Taking Control"

9

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* Lazarus, R.S. (1999)

Dealing with the Situation…
*Emotion-Oriented Coping**

Axial Code	Open Code Examples
9 Dramatisation	*"People were **playing it up for the cameras**. When we saw the first helicopters with cameras, people were running into their cabins to grab their bathrobes and life preservers"*
3 Generic Attribution Attempt	*"If something is gonna happen **it doesn't matter** if its a plane or a ship"*
4 Positive Interpretation (Optimism)	*"I feel like I can **survive anything** now"*
	*"You can roll with it, since You can not control it. Or You can upset yourself & lose sight of an otherwise **'Adventurous Time'**"*

- Strategies aimed at changing the way one thinks or feels about a stressful situation.
- Objective is the reduction of negative emotional responses associated with stress such as:
  - Embarrassment
  - Fear - anxiety
  - Depression
  - Excitement
  - Frustration

16

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* Lazarus, R.S. (1999)

Dealing with the Situation…
*Cognitive / Reappraisal-Oriented Coping**

Axial Code

6 Positive Recollection

3 Perceived Solidarity

Open Code Examples

"This is our first trip on a cruise holiday and after what has happened ***you would think we would not want to go again*** *but you are so wrong"*

"As the ship finally limped into harbour in the Seychelles, the holidaymakers also said they adopted a ***'Blitz spirit'*** *to cope with dire sanitary conditions and cabin temperatures of 110f (43c)."*

"There is no panic, everybody is fine and they are just getting on with it. It is the ***Dunkirk spirit*** *and they are making the best of the situation"*

- Coping processes that induce positive emotions by reenacting:
  - Problem- oriented coping experiences
  - Emotion- oriented coping experiences

9

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* Lazarus, R.S. (1999)

Assessing the Situation…
*Primary Appraisal**

Axial Code	Open Code Examples
10 Comparison to Past Events	*"We'd all **read recent news** of disturbing travel stories: the sea captain abandoning his Italian cruise liner after it keeled over; fire striking a sister ship in the Indian ocean and towed to shore a month later…"*
19 Information Processing	*"I just **want the truth**. If you said to me listen, we have some problems and we are trying to get to work them out... But just keep saying everything is fine, you have nothing to worry about, you go to your room and you shaking, moving and everything, it is like; what is going on!"*
16 Gratification	*"The first thing we did was open up those **Diet Cokes** and we drank some"*
4 Attribution Specificity	*"There were **problems on that ship** way back in December. They should have done something about it"*

- Evaluation of the significance of a stressor or threatening event

49

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* Lazarus, R.S. (1999)

Assessing the Situation…
*Secondary Appraisal**

Axial Code	Open Code Examples
18 Crew Competence Perception	*"It quickly became apparent that the **captain and crew were incompetent and totally clueless**. There were clearly no procedures in place for dealing with the emergency …"*
4 External Support Access / Visibility	*"Few in the media have mentioned the three cruise ships that took time out of their cruise vacations to stop and render aid to us. The passengers of these ships stayed on deck cheering and calling to us the whole time they were there**. It made us feel less alone in that vast, endless ocean** and let us know we were not forgotten."*

- Evaluation of the controllability of the stressor and a person's coping resources.

22

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* Lazarus, R.S. (1999). *Stress and Emotion. A new Synthesis.* London: Free Association Books

Assessing the Situation…
*Observed Outcomes**

Axial Code	Open Code Examples
3 Compensation	*"I will actually (book again). I **got a 50**%"*
23 Anti-social Behaviour (of others)	*"A lot of people were **crying and freaking** out."*
	*"She was crying and **hysterical**"*
6 Perceived Self-Determination & Privacy	*"Going to the bathroom in plastic bags and then handing it to another human being to throw it away — that **is just the most embarrassing thing**!"*
	*"It just feels so good to be on land again and to feel **like I have options**"*

- Evaluation of the controllability of the stressor and a person's coping resources.

32

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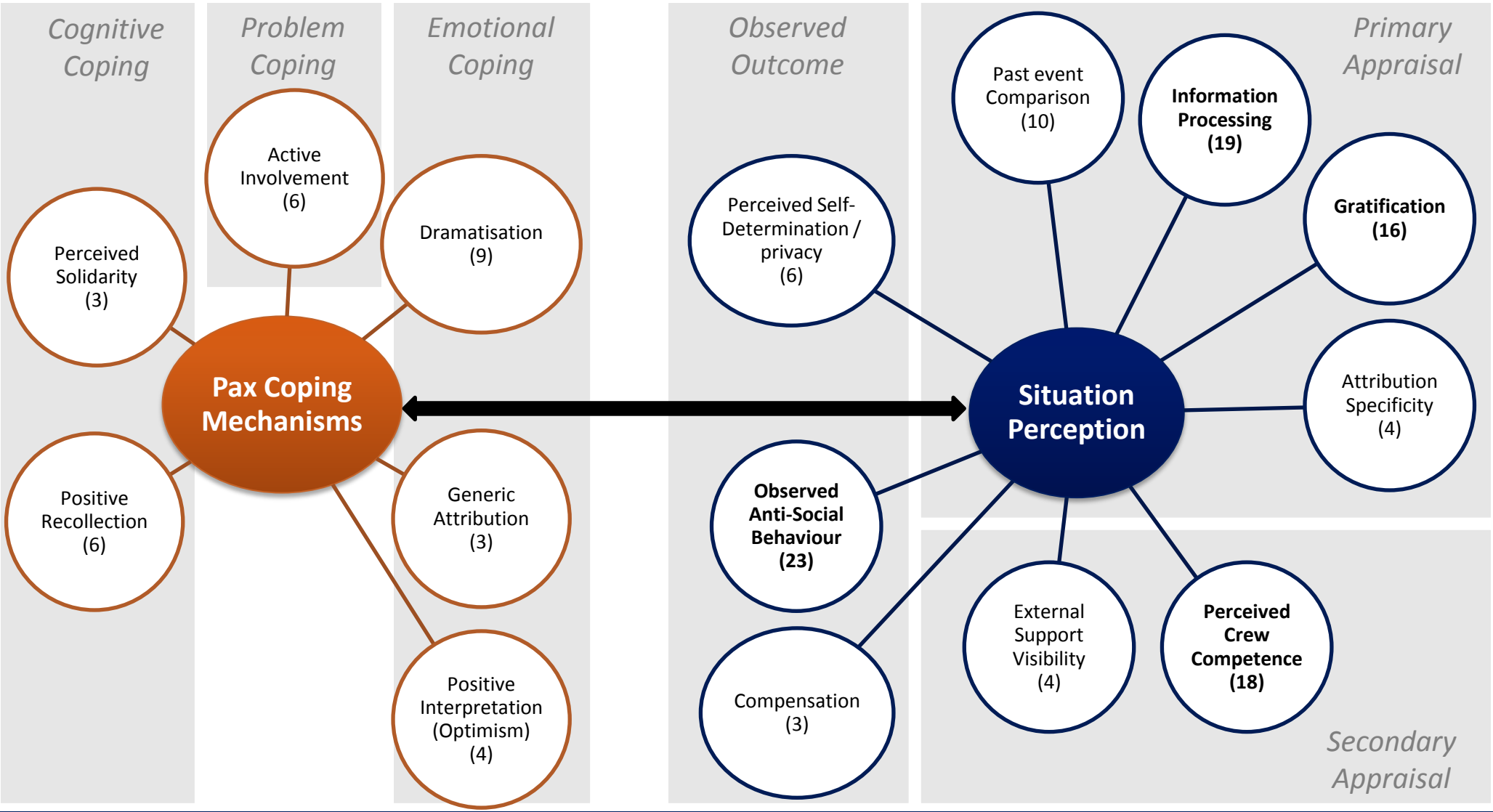
* Lazarus, R.S. (1999). *Stress and Emotion. A new Synthesis.* London: Free Association Books

Towards a Conceptual Model of Pax Reactions During Cruise Incidents



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Implications & Discussion

Support vs. Control Principle

Psychological Support vs. Crowd Control	Interpretation Support vs. (Mis)Information Control	Crew Support vs. Passenger Control	Compensation vs. Liability Control
• Encourage active involvement of passengers on dealing with the crisis • Support public / provide forums for passengers to communicate their experiences and vent their frustrations • Dramatising and complaining is not equal to panic	• Hard with the facts and soft with the people (not visa versa) • Honesty + Help with interpretation (i.e. What does this mean for me) • Continuous communication of progress • Freedom of information / communication (on- and off-board)	• Encourage crew initiative and educate on principle-based crisis management (not restrict to regulations / procedures) • Passengers cannot be controlled... Only the situation can be, from those responsible and trained to do so	• Guiding principle: "People over money... It pays off!" • Invest in improving living conditions / passenger well-being during the incidents instead of saving money to spend later on law suits and reclaims

To what extent are the above findings relevant for other cruise disaster scenarios?

To what extent do the current safety regulations and training adhere to the above-mentioned set of principles?

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There is nothing so strong or safe in an **emergency** of life as the **simple truth.**

Charles Dickens

Risk is trying to **control** something you are **powerless** over.

Eric Clapton

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Thank You for your Attention

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